Reviewing the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan

Visions Fulfilled

May 2020

Ohlone College
43600 Mission Boulevard
Fremont, California 94539
A newly released (April 23, 2020) report from College Consensus, a unique college ratings website that aggregates publisher rankings and student reviews, identified the top 50 community colleges in the nation. Colleges were ranked based on cost, reputation, and success using publicly available data. The resultant analysis using those factors ranked Ohlone College as the #1 community college in the nation! The top ten colleges, according to College Consensus, are

1. Ohlone College, Fremont, California
2. DeAnza College, Cupertino, California
3. Cypress College, Cypress, California
4. Lee College, Baytown, Texas
5. GateWay Community College, Phoenix, Arizona
6. Coconino County Community College, Flagstaff, Arizona
7. Cochise College, Sierra Vista, Arizona
8. Foothill College, Los Altos, California
9. Napa Valley College, Napa, California
10. South Mountain Community College, Phoenix, Arizona

Within the top 50, community colleges were spread across the nation from Washington to Michigan to North Carolina to Arizona—but Ohlone emerged at the top of the list.

While such recognition was unexpected, it was not surprising, given the levels of success the College has experienced throughout the term of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. For instance, the 2018 Student Success Scorecard, in the final year of its use, showed the College consistently above statewide and peer averages, among the highest performing colleges in the state on multiple metrics. These numbers reflect well the hard work of the Ohlone staff, the dedication of the faculty, the diligence of the students, and the vision of collegewide planning that identifies aspirational goals and the means to attain them.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The College set for itself seven aspirational goals to be fulfilled in the subsequent five years beginning in 2015. These goals varied from improving student learning and achievement; to being good stewards of resources; to increasing collaboration and communication. In the aggregate, all seven goals were met: some spectacularly, some not as well as originally envisioned. But taken together, the College moved forward in remarkable ways: achieving the highest remedial math improvement rate in the state; attaining the highest online course success rate among the 21 community colleges in the Bay Area; receiving the fifth largest gift in California Community College history; and occupying the Frank DiMino Academic Core Complex, three beautifully visionary instructional buildings. These are but a few of the highlights taken from the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan.
Provoking the success of the College’s seven goals were 35 objectives, made operational by 170 action plans. Of those action plans, 47% were discrete, one-time plans that were completed. Another 32% were plans that were ongoing, needing to be met throughout time, and they are being met. Eight percent of the action plans were recently added to the strategic plan, while 11% were, at some point in the plan, discontinued as no longer relevant. Only 2% of the total action plans went unmet at some level. Removing those plans that were discontinued or too new to have been reasonably assessed, 97% of the remaining 149 action plans have been, or are being, completed.

Every objective had its own set of action plans—interventions, improvements, implementations—designed to help students better succeed. In some instances the College sought to improve systems and procedures to make tasks for both students and employees more efficient and more effective. At other times, additional services were provided or increased instructional support was added. Action plans were tasks the College did to meet the objective.
GOAL 1: Through innovative programs and services, improve student learning and achievement.

OBJECTIVE 1.1. By 2020, increase the number of degree-, certificate-, and transfer-attaining students by 10% over 2017 baseline, consistent with the goals of the Vision for Success initiative.

As originally envisioned, this first objective of Goal #1 was responding to Student Success Scorecard metrics. It initially sought to increase the completion rate—that is, students attaining degrees, certificates, or transfers—from 57.0% to 59.7%.

Progress through the years looked like this (Figure 1):

The metric also included completion rate for prepared and unprepared students, with the definition of “unprepared” being any student who took a basic skills course upon admission to the College. The measurable outcome for prepared students was to increase the completion rate from 78.7% to 79.0%, while the unprepared rate sought to go from 47.2% to 50.0%.

Progress in meeting this metric from 2015–2018 looked like this (Figure 2) & (Figure 3):

*The Scorecard was discontinued by the CCCCO after 2018.*
To put these numbers in context, all of these rates placed the College above the statewide average, the peer group average, and the Bay 10 average. Despite downturns in 2018, the College still ranked fifth highest in completion rate among Bay 10 colleges, sixth highest among peers (a peer group representing some of the highest achieving community colleges in the state), and tenth highest completion rate statewide. The 2018 college-prepared rate was the highest rate in the Bay 10 as well as the highest among peers.

The Scorecard as a statewide metric was superseded by two initiatives. First was the creation of the Vision for Success goals, along with new metrics and definitions of success, followed by the implementation of the Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF). The SCFF ultimately came to drive the revision of Objective 1.1 because success in SCFF metrics translated to increased funding for the College. Given that priority, the measurable outcomes of 1.1 changed from a completion rate to a number of unduplicated students attaining degrees, certificates, and transfers.

The current measurable outcome is to increase the number of degree-, certificate-, and transfer-, attaining students by 10% over the 2017 baseline. Initially this metric was built to look at just the sheer number of completions, and results were amazing: (Figure 4)

**Figure 4: Number of Degrees, Certificates, and Transfers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Degrees Awarded</th>
<th>Certificates Awarded</th>
<th>Transfers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>1077</td>
<td>1462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>1077</td>
<td>1462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>1077</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5: Students Completing Degrees, Certificates and Transfer**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Degrees Awarded</th>
<th>Certificates Awarded</th>
<th>Transfers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>701</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>634</td>
<td>701</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>701</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 6: Certificates Awarded by Category**

- Certificates of Achievement: 16+ units, approved by the Chancellor's Office, and qualify for funding under the Student Centered Funding Formula.
- Certificates of Accomplishment: less than 16 units, locally approved, and do not qualify for funding.
But as the SCFF metrics changed from number of completions to number of completers, the results—still very good—are not as dramatic; particularly because the SCFF only counts certificates with 16+ units and transfers just to CSU and UC. Looking at the number of funded awards, the number of 16+ unit Certificates of Achievement decline significantly. (Figure 5)

The declines in degrees reflect the tendency of many college graduates to earn multiple degrees, but the SCFF metrics only count one of them. Similarly, students who complete a certificate with 16 or more units the same year as they complete a degree are not counted as earning both programs. Because most of the certificates with 16 or more units align with, and are completed simultaneously with, the degree major, only the degree is counted. (Figure 6)

Dramatic drop in numbers aside, it is noteworthy that the goal was to increase by 10% over the 2017 baseline, and the status after the first two years is a 10.7% increase, so even maintaining the current number of degree-completers in 2020 would result in meeting the aspirational outcome. Similarly, certificate attainment is currently up 12.5%, while transfers rose a noteworthy 22.5%—in just two years.

So what did the College do to push up those numbers? Objective 1.1 had 13 different action plans, and the completion of those action plans is praiseworthy in itself. Particularly noteworthy is the implementation of the Student Success and Support Program (SSSP), a mandated initiative that fell almost entirely in the lap of the Counseling Department. Many of the action plans for 1.1 mirrored the SSSP project. For instance, mandatory orientations, educational plans, multiple measure assessment, early alert for students at risk, follow-up for probationary students—all were included in the 1.1 action plans and have become ongoing practices within the College.

Here is how things have changed as a result:

First-time students accessing orientation went from 73.6% in 2015 to 94.7% in 2019;
Students accessing counseling services went from 44.1% in 2015 to 45.7% in 2019.

With the implementation of multiple measure assessment, mandated by AB705, dramatic changes emerged in the number of students successfully completing transfer level math and English courses. (Table 1)

**Table 1: Impact of AB705 on Success Numbers and Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Students Succeeding in MATH-159</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success Rate in MATH-159</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
<td>69.3%</td>
<td>79.2%</td>
<td>64.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Students Succeeding in ENGL-101A</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>854</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success Rate in ENGL-101A</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
<td>68.5%</td>
<td>72.2%</td>
<td>75.3%</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In fall 2019, the College saw a 10.6% increase over the prior year in the number of students passing ENGL-101A, the required transfer level English course, but compared to fall 2015, when enrollment was 15% higher than 2019, the number of students successfully completing ENGL-101A was 45.7% higher than the number four years prior. Even more dramatic gains were witnessed in MATH-159 (Statistics), the most popular transfer level math option for students. The fall 2019 number of students attaining a C or better was up 39.5% over the prior year, with an 83.7% gain over four years.
Although an electronic educational planning tool has been a part of the strategic plan since its inception in 2015, initial efforts at completion stalled. In fall 2019, however, implementation of the Student Planning tool was re-launched and is winding its way through initial set up and testing. The timeline to have implementation by April 2020 was probably unattainable, even before the COVID-19 disruptions, but a 2020-2021 goal seems realistic.

The successful implementation of Starfish, an early alert communication software linking at-risk students with both instructional faculty and counselors, was an important, completed action plan in Objective 1.1. Additionally, as of spring 2019, 76% of students meeting SSSP guidelines as needing an educational plan had completed the required plan; additionally, 99% of those students continued to have contact with counselors after this initial orientation.

Beyond action plans generated by SSSP, Objective 1.1 also had action plans that aligned with the Strong Workforce (SWF) grant. These action plans were added late (in 2018) to the strategic plan, but in keeping with the College’s practice of integrating all plans and initiatives in the singularly comprehensive strategic plan. The SWF action plan to establish economically viable stackable certificates in career education fields was an opportunity to create, or re-create, both credit and noncredit career education-focused programs. More than a dozen new noncredit certificates have been created aimed at short-term vocational training, while several new credit certificates in multimedia have also been approved.

To address the action plan for more focused recruitment and outreach to career education students, Strong Workforce funds were used to hire an outreach coordinator to recruit career education and financial aid students. Although the position only started in June 2019, 35 separate outreach events touched 3,000 prospective students at high schools and adult schools within the District.

With the goal of increasing the number of degree-, certificate-, and transfer-attaining students by 10% over the 2017 baseline, Objective 1.1 is being met. Degree-attaining students were up 10.7% in just the first two years, SCFF-funded certificate-attaining were up 12.5%, and transfers were up 22.5%.

**OBJECTIVE 1.2.** By 2020, increase by 10% over the 2017 baseline the number of students who transfer to a UC or a CSU, consistent with the goals of the Vision for Success initiative.

This is another objective that was modified over the original to align with the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Vision for Success. Initially Objective 1.2 was written to increase the number of transfers to 1,000 by 2018. After one year, and in light of declining enrollments, the metric was changed from an absolute number to a rate: increase the rate of transfer from 10.9% of annual FTES to 11.2%. But with the need to incorporate the Vision for Success goals within the strategic plan, the current objective was crafted.

In addressing this objective—to increase by 10% over the 2017 baseline the number of students transferring specifically to California State Universities (CSU) and Universities of California (UC)—preliminary results are mixed and numbers for this objective exclude transfers to in-state private and out-of-state universities found in Objective 1.1. In 2017, 243 students transferred to a UC, while 548 went to a CSU. In 2018, 261 enrolled at a UC—a one-year gain of 7%—and 577 students transferred to a CSU—a 5% one-year gain. Numbers for 2019 are not entirely available nor replicable. The UC Office of the President reports 248 transfers from Ohlone, down 5% from the prior year. The CSU’s Chancellor’s Office data site, however,
was rebuilt in 2019, and the number of transfers reported for all years is significantly different from the numbers reported on the previous site. The new data shows the number of CSU transfer students from Ohlone at 457 for 2017, 467 in 2018, and 448 in 2019. Using the CSU’s new numbers, transfers to CSU have declined 2% since 2017. UC transfers are up 2% over the same two year period. In light of a concurrent two year enrollment decline of 8% at the College (2017 annual head count of 16,996 declining to 15,609 in 2019) the essentially static transfer number should not be alarming. In absolute numbers, total UC and CSU transfers fell from 700 to 696. Adjusting for the enrollment decline, the transfer rate would reflect a 7% increase over 2017– not the 10% gain in numbers sought, but a relative gain in transfer rate, nonetheless.

**OBJECTIVE 1.3.** Increase course completion rates for all students from 74.1% to 75.0% for all courses and for distance education courses from 67.2% to 68.0% by 2019.

Student success rates—that is, the rate of students completing a class with a grade of C or better—are a vital component of both student learning and achievement. Objective 1.3 sets a target of raising success rate for all students from 74.1% to 75.0% by 2019, and it especially targeted online success rates—which were notably lagging—to increase from 67.2% to 68.0%. This is an objective wherein the College essentially met its goal, but also excelled to the point of having some of the highest success rates in the Bay Area.

The College’s fall 2019 overall success rate (also referred to as a course completion rate) in all courses was 74.9%, just short of the desired 75.0%. However, in transferable courses the success rate is 75.2%, while online success in transferable courses is a remarkable 75.1%. Even more encouraging are the success rates in career education courses, where 80.4% of students succeed, with an online success rate of 78.8%. The overall transferable success rate is third highest among the 21 colleges of the Bay 10, while the online success rate is the highest in the Bay 10. Vocational success rates are second highest to both overall rates and online rates, exceeded only by Foothill College.

The all-course success rate was diminished because the basic skills rate was only 71.8%, but even that is a notable improvement over the 2015 basic skills rate of 68.2%. The all-course online success rate of 74.9% far exceeds the objective goal of 68.0% and is also highest for all-course online success rates in the Bay 10.

**OBJECTIVE 1.4.** Increase the percentage of students tracked for six years through 2018-19 who started first time in 2013-14 below transfer level in mathematics and completed a college-level course in the same discipline from 46.1% to 51.1% by 2019.

Objectives 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6 were all created in response to the Student Success Scorecard metrics addressing student success in transitioning from basic skills to transfer level courses. These objectives were tracked through the first three years of the strategic plan, but with the advent of AB705 and the demise of the Scorecard, these objectives were discontinued. However, College progress in meeting these objectives was noteworthy.

Objective 1.4 sought to increase the rate of students who started in a basic skills math course and eventually succeeded in transfer level math. The target was to raise the math improvement rate from 46.1% to 51.1% by 2019. When the last
Scorecard was issued in 2018, the math improvement rate was 55.8%. Not only did that rate exceed the target, it was the highest math improvement rate in the state, besting all 113 other community colleges. (Figure 7)

Action plans that contributed to this achievement included the distribution of embedded tutors in basic skills math classes, particularly in algebra, the course where most basic skills math students stalled. The expansion of the College’s tutoring capabilities came with the hiring of a Director of Tutoring in 2015, just prior to the start of this strategic plan. The implementation of the Starfish early alert system, piloted first with basic skills students, was also a support for these improvement rates, as was accelerated basic skills curriculum objectives, notably the creation of the Ohlone Math Gateway (OMG), a learning community supporting basic skills math students seeking to major in engineering.

With the enacting of AB705 provoking a statewide movement away from substantial basic skills programs, the College reduced the number of basic skills math sections from 39 (30% of math offerings) in 2015 to three (3% of math offerings) in 2019. Objective 1.4 was, therefore, discontinued beginning with the spring 2019 assessment cycle.

The corollary to reducing enrollment in basic skills math is the increase in enrollment in transfer level math—and the corresponding increase in success—noted in the Objective 1.1. To reiterate, using only one transfer level math course as the example, the number of students successfully passing the statistics course in fall 2019 was 83.7% higher than the number passing in fall 2015 when college enrollment was 15% greater than 2019.
OBJECTIVE 1.5. Increase the percentage of students tracked for six years through 2018-19 who started first time in 2013-14 below transfer level in English and completed a college-level course in the same discipline from 52.0% to 57.0% by 2019.

Similar to the preceding objective, 1.5 sought an increase in English improvement—students beginning in a basic skills English class and eventually succeeding in transfer level English. The target was to increase from 52.0% to 57.0% by 2019.

The objective, although discontinued, provoked some concern in the last year it was active. In 2017 the English improvement rate had shot all the way up to 61.3%, not only well above the target, but high enough to be ranked highest among peer colleges and second highest in the Bay 10, after DeAnza. But in 2018, the last year of the Scorecard, the improvement rate fell to 54.2%, fifth among peers and seventh in the Bay 10. That rate is still above statewide, peer, and Big 10 averages, but has fallen below the objective target. (Figure 8)

As noted above, however, the transition of students into transfer level English, bypassing basic skills course requirements, has resulted in increased numbers of transfer level English success. In fall 2019, 45.7% more students passed ENGL-101A with a C or better than had passed in fall 2015 when enrollments were 15% higher. The changes in curricular offerings are also notable. In fall 2015 there were 72 English basic skills classes (49% of offerings) and in fall 2019 there were only 12 (12% of offerings). Objective 1.5 was discontinued in 2019.
OBJECTIVE 1.6. | Increase the percentage of students tracked for six years through 2018-19 who started first time in 2013-14 below transfer level in ESL and completed a college-level course in the same discipline from 19.8% to 24.8% by 2019.

This third basic skills objective sought to raise English as a second language (ESL) improvement rates from 19.8% to 24.8% by 2019, but it, too, became somewhat irrelevant with the passage of AB705, the end of the Student Success Scorecard, and the advent of the College’s noncredit program.

Looking at numbers, the ESL improvement rate exceeded its target, reaching a 28.2% level by the last scorecard in 2018. While this gain is in some ways a success—the College did meet its desired metric—28.2% is still below the statewide, peer, and Bay 10 averages. But there are some caveats.

The College’s ESL curriculum is set up in such a way that there are four levels of ESL before a student might enroll in transfer level English, which affords multiple opportunities for students to fail or drop out. Many other colleges have beginning ESL offered as noncredit, where course failure or drops are not counted in the improvement rate. Despite the fact that this improvement rate is no longer calculated in the Scorecard, the College has started a noncredit ESL curriculum, to be offered for the first time in spring 2019. It is intended that this transition—a planned curricular change for the past few years—will better support students with English language learning needs.

OBJECTIVE 1.7. | By spring 2019, provide support to increase cross-disciplinary communication to improve student learning and achievement.

This objective was aimed at fostering communication and collaboration across disciplines—promoting ways departments can work together rather than being quite so discipline-specific. The strategic plan as first conceived insured a teaching and learning center (aptly named the TLC) that would occupy the space within the Library and would be a neutral site for cross-disciplinary workshops, forums for faculty collaborations, and other professional development activities for faculty. It was also planned that the TLC would host a website that would be used for training.

The Teaching and Learning Center was launched, along with the website, in the first year of the strategic plan with pilot activities and a remarkable montage of Student Voices on the website. However, the loss of staff and space halted further progress, and the Teaching and Learning Center itself was discontinued. The TLC website remains, but is not regularly maintained.

Other action plans, apart from the TLC, did persist. Early alert training for faculty on the use of Starfish was implemented across departments, and Starfish is regularly and successfully employed in teaching and supporting at-risk students. A late addition to the action plans was the plan to begin Guided Pathways, which clearly cuts across academic and student services disciplines. A Guided Pathways task force was created and immediately provoked collaboration across departments and divisions. The envisioning of interest areas and curricular maps should lead to high levels of completion and the accumulation of fewer units at completion, both advantageous to students. With its good start and admirable, attainable goals, Guided Pathways will certainly carryover to the next strategic plan.
OBJECTIVE 1.8. By spring 2017, coordinate and monitor opportunities for students to engage in career exploration and develop awareness of requirements necessary for successful program completion and career readiness.

This objective was designed primarily to address student exploration of careers and programs, enabling them to have a plan for moving toward their life goals. With that perspective in mind, one of the first action plans to be completed was the redesign of the College website. On the new website, students are introduced first to career options. Selection of a prospective career then points students to programs that best facilitate attaining the chosen career goal, and the program then points to course-taking patterns. In this way, students are encouraged to think in terms of outcomes—careers—instead of beginning with a possible, or possibly wrong, major.

An exceptional improvement in support of student career exploration and readiness was the transformation of the Tri-Cities One Stop Career Center, a community-serving job placement center, to the Ohlone College Career Center, a student-focused career center. With a new director coming over from the highly successful San José State University Career Center, the new look center still serves the community, but has added numerous internship opportunities for students and is much more attuned to students needs for both short-term and career goals. The Career Center is also aware of industry’s desire for employee mastery of soft skills—customer service, presentations, and professionalism, as examples—and the center provides workshops and training for students in those areas, ensuring job readiness, not just job placement.

Aligned with other objectives with in the strategic plan, Objective 1.8 has an action plan to develop educational plans for students. In addition to the increasing rate of students meeting with counselors to get an educational plan, students are now provided an additional incentive: students are given a bump in their registration priority date once they have a completed educational plan. To further facilitate this action plan’s desired outcome, creation of an educational plan is now a part of new student orientation. An initial educational plan is written during orientation, and then counseling follows up with students to complete a comprehensive plan. In spring 2019, for example, 99% of orientation students had a post-orientation contact with a counselor, and 76% completed a comprehensive educational plan.
To encourage decisiveness among students whose majors are undeclared, the Career Center emails such students every two weeks, exposing them to job and internship options. This contact also provides information about upcoming career activities offered by the Career Center, career tips, and encouragement to start on a career path.

Perhaps one of the most exciting achievements of this objective relates to the action plan to provide career advancement services to prospective Ohlone students, as well as to current and former students. The career center not only finds careers for students, but finds students for careers.

Partnerships with the Mission Valley Regional Occupational Program and with district alternative high schools provide career exploration and career planning for high school students. Training modules address educational paths and majors, job search strategies, work ethics, and internship opportunities. This program also includes a College Career Day to introduce prospective students to Ohlone College faculty, programs, and student services. For current and former students, the Career Center hosts an Ohlone-specific job board and hosts job fairs, information sessions, and one-on-one career advising.

It is apparent through the innovations fostered by Objective 1.8 that the College has made great strides in supporting career exploration and readiness. Much of this success is rightfully attributed to the resources and personnel of the Career Center and the Strong Workforce office.

**OBJECTIVE 1.9. | Provide appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable support services for all students regardless of location, time, or mode of course delivery by spring 2019.**

Objective 1.9 is essentially taken from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) standards, specifically Standard II.C.3, and appears because the College had not been doing well in providing some student services to some students at the time of the original writing of the 2015-2020 strategic plan. At the time of writing it was felt that services at Newark were, in some ways, inadequate; but initial investigations revealed that Newark students were accessing student services at approximately the same rate as Fremont students. What was discovered were inadequacies in serving online-only, evening-only, and weekend-only students—those students who would not be on a campus where services were provided or were there when services were not open.

Comparing areas to student services in fall 2016, immediately after the objective was launched, to fall 2013, the term referenced in the 2014 self-study documents, some dramatic increases were evident. (Figure 9 & Figure 10)
Orientation for new students and access to counseling services are the student services reflecting the most dramatic gains. This is due, in large measure, to the choice of action plans created in response to the objective and the emphasis of the emerging SSSP. Most of the 11 original action plans addressed either orientation or counseling. This gives insight into why other student services—financial aid and education plans, for instance—did not see a similar jump in access rates. One exception was Student Accommodation Services (SAS, formerly DSPS) services. These rates did show a similar increase from fall 2013 to fall 2016. (Figure 11)

Although rates for targeted groups did increase in the first year, continuous increase over subsequent years was not evident, leaving the appearance that some students are under-served. To address this issue, the Counseling Department has further extended evening hours, both at Fremont and Newark, and is reviewing, with an intention of upgrading, online counseling capability. Additionally, upgrades to other online student services through the implementation of Colleague Self-Service will provide greater access for non-traditional and adult students, including online-, evening-, and weekend-only students.

Other action plans to support greater access to student services were variously successful or not successful. The Starfish early alert system saw the number of referrals for at-risk students increase from 10 to 210 per term, but the action plan to create interactive orientation videos had to be scrapped as cost prohibitive. The action plan to identify gaps in services to target groups remains ongoing, as do the gaps themselves, and Objective 1.9 will continue in some measure in the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.
OBJECTIVE 1.10. By fall 2016, migrate SLO assessment to a database platform that will share and disaggregate data.

The objective to create and implement a cloud-based platform for student learning outcome assessment was probably the first, and most completely, met objective of the strategic plan. As established, the fall 2016 timeline was met with the opening and ongoing use of the Cloud SLO Assessment Page. Not only does this platform become the repository for all learning outcome assessment, but the site also includes video tutorials, the assessment schedule, drop-in workshops, and an archive of prior assessments. This objective was clearly, and early, met.

OBJECTIVE 1.11. Basic skills students will complete six degree-applicable units by the third semester of enrollment.

With the implementation of AB705 and the demise of the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI), Objectives 1.11-1.13 are now unnecessary. These objectives were incorporated into the strategic plan because the BSI—like all initiatives and plans—are integrated into the College’s master planning document. When the BSI went away, so too did the need for these objectives. Ironically, these three objectives were added to the strategic plan as a part of the exercise of capturing all College plans and initiatives within the comprehensive strategic plan, and action plans and measurable outcomes were crafted; but before the first assessment of these new objectives, AB705 was passed, and the basic skills world changed. As such, no formal assessment was ever completed for Objective 1.11, although assessments were written for 1.12 and 1.13, primarily because their action plans were implemented apart from the effects of AB705.

OBJECTIVE 1.12. Improve tutorial services for ESL courses.

Objective 1.12 focused on tutorial services, specifically their impact on ESL students; however, the implementation of tutorial services served all students, not just those in ESL courses. The development of a substantial tutoring support system is one highlight of this strategic plan. In addition to hiring a director to oversee this significantly increased service, the College also implemented tutor-tracking software that enabled instructor to tutee communication and that collected course-specific data for analysis of student access and success. Tutor training was accelerated, embedded tutors were added to courses with the highest incidence of at-risk students—specifically basic skills courses—and the employment of tutors across the curriculum became more widespread. For an objective that could have been dismissed as no longer required, meeting Objective 1.12 was clearly a successful venture.

OBJECTIVE 1.13. Improve course completion in basic skills and ESL for target populations identified in the college research as experiencing a disproportionate impact or adverse effect.

1.13 was continued, as well, because it was closely aligned with the outcomes sought in Goal #4, the support of the under-represented and disproportionately impacted students. The measurable outcome of 1.13 sought to support African American student success in basic skills courses; African American students were selected as the targeted group specifically because
they evidenced disproportionate impact in their basic skills success rates. With the spring 2017 assessment, an additional action plan was added to address Latinx student success through increased services to Puente. Re-instituting a successful Umoja learning community was a primary action plan within the objective, and this learning community was re-launched in fall 2019, with linked courses of English composition, an attendant English support course, and a personal development college success course. This learning community, initially designed for African American students, had about 20% non-African American enrollment but, more significantly, had few successful completers; only nine of 27 students earned a grade of C or better in their transfer level English composition course, despite the two additionally linked support classes and the benefits of a cohort learning community.

The action plan promoting embedded tutors in basic skills classes to support African American students had mixed and, due to small numbers, perhaps unreliable results. Because African American enrollment in basic skills classes—in fact, in many classes—is relatively small, success rates can be particularly volatile. But the rates do not reflect any consistent trends, regardless. For some basic skills classes in some semesters, success in classes with embedded tutors show gains, but in other classes and semesters the success rate in embedded tutor-classes are below those classes having no tutors. At least as of yet, this action plan does not appear to be effective.

A great success, however, was the plan to increase the Puente program for Latinx students. Using the 2018-2019 academic year as the most recent annual assessment, students enrolled in the Puente program had all-course success rates that were not only higher than that for all Latinx students, but the Puente success rate exceeded the success rates of all student groups. (Figure 12)

Figure 12: Ohlone College Puente Program Course Success Rates in Credit/Transferable Courses of All Ohlone College Students by Ethnicity and Puente Students 2018-2019 Academic Year

Clearly this was a marked success within Objective 1.13.
OBJECTIVE 1.14. | By 2020, decrease by 5% below the 2017 baseline the average number of units accumulated by students earning an associate's degree in non-health science majors, consistent with the goals of the Vision for Success initiative.

This final objective of Goal #1 was added with the 2018 assessment in response to the mandate to incorporate the Chancellor’s Office Vision for Success goals within every community college’s strategic plan. This objective sought to decrease the number of units accumulated by graduates, thereby fostering a more efficient time to completion. The accumulated units of graduates, because they reflect units taken at community colleges other than Ohlone, are supplied by the Chancellor’s Office and take time to collect and post. Therefore, there is only one year’s worth of data to compare to the prescribed 2017 baseline.

The 2017 data shows that Ohlone students are inclined to have more units when they graduate than do students at other community colleges. The college is aware of several contributing factors that promote this accumulation—some for good reasons, some perhaps not—but the mandate from the Chancellor’s Office is to find ways to reduce this trend. The 2017 baseline showed all graduates had an average of 96.0 units when they left Ohlone; that number was reduced to 95 units in 2018, the only additional year that data is available. This 1% drop is not on track to meet the 5% reduction projected for 2020.

Realistically, however, all these numbers will be irrelevant with the advent of the AB705 curricular changes. Without the requirement to complete perhaps multiple non-degree-applicable basic skills classes, all students in all California community colleges should witness a significant drop in accumulated units. The 2017 students who were not compelled to take basic skills classes completed degrees accumulating an average of 73.7 units; by 2018, this number had dropped to 71.0. With a 60 unit minimum for all associate degrees, these anticipated numbers will likely more closely mirror the statewide average.
GOAL 2: Provide relevant sustainable Career Education (CE) that is responsive to student needs, supports student academic success, and prepares students to meet industry needs.

OBJECTIVE 2.12. By 2020, increase by 7% over the 2017 baseline the rate of exiting CE students who report being employed in their field of study, consistent with the goals of the Vision for Success initiative.

Another Vision for Success goal, as rewritten, this objective was originally crafted to monitor the relevancy and currency of career education programs and, frankly, was not well tracked nor assessed. With the revision, the College has access to metrics through the Chancellor’s Office so progress can be tracked and assessed. Unfortunately, the data does not address recent years because data is not displayed until students have been two years out of the community college system. Given those parameters, the 2017 baseline would reflect dates from the students who exited the College in 2015. Of the students who exited in the 2014-2015 school year and subsequently responded to the outcomes survey, 79% reported being employed in their field of study. However the following, and most recent, year’s data shows the rate has dropped to 77%. For some perspective, the statewide average for this most recent data is 75%. For additional perspective, 77% is sixth highest among colleges in the Bay Area. So although the College does not appear yet to be progressing toward its selected metric of a 7% game by 2020, it is performing above the statewide average.
This objective has consistently contained action plans engaging program review and input from advisory committees to ensure that courses and programs were aligned with industry needs. While there is no assurance that such practice leads necessarily to student success in a chosen career, there are some encouraging metrics from the Chancellor’s Office. For instance, 71% of Ohlone career education students (students completing career education coursework and not transferring to a university) were earning a living wage within two years of leaving the College. This rate is the highest of all 21 colleges in the Bay Area, with only two other colleges attaining a rate above 50%. (Figure 13)
Even more dramatic, the median annual earnings of the most recent cohort one year after leaving the College is $85,120. Not only is this wage level the highest in the Bay Area, it is more than double the earnings of students at 17 of the remaining 20 Bay Area colleges. (Figure 14)

An additional action plan was added in 2018 to integrate the Strong Workforce grant into the strategic plan. The action plan committed the College, through Strong Workforce funds, to foster improvement in career education by investing in facilities, equipment, instructional material, and professional development, in order to align programs with industry needs and support student success. In 2018-2019, Strong Workforce funds were used to purchase equipment in seven career education departments, provide faculty professional development for seven departments, and complete the renovation of the biotechnology laboratory at Newark.

Although only 12% of Ohlone students take nine or more units in a career education field—a rate lowest in the Bay 10—it is evident that those students are eminently successful. It is important to note that as a college primarily renown for successful transfer students, Ohlone’s career-directed students are also among the best in the Bay Area—and in the state.
OBJECTIVE 2.13. | Increase the percentage of students who started in a single discipline for the first time in 2013-14 tracked for six years through 2018-19, completing more than eight units in courses classified as career education (CE) who completed a degree, certificate, apprenticeship or transfer related outcome from 44.4%* to 49.4%.

This is another objective originally designed to address the metrics—and shortcomings—of the Student Success Scorecard. In 2015, the College’s vocational (career education) course completion rate was 44.4%, below the statewide, peer, and Bay 10 averages—and close to the bottom of each. At the time a target was set that would at least get the College above the peer group and Bay 10 averages—both the Bay 10 and peer colleges representing more transfer-oriented curriculum, similar to Ohlone’s—although unlike many statewide colleges that have a more vocational focus. Within three years, as reflected in the 2018 Scorecard, the College’s vocational course completion rate was up to 57.8%, a rate above statewide, peer, and Bay 10 averages. This rate was fifth highest among the 21 Bay 10 colleges and fifth highest among 23 statewide peers. (Figure 15)

Two particular action plans contributed to the success and will continue, even though the objective itself was discontinued with the cessation of the Scorecard. One intervention was led by the Career Center: the annual career center survey. The survey not only provided useful data for addressing the career needs of students, but is also used to maintain connections with career-oriented students, providing information about careers and encouragement to succeed. The other action plan was for the Counseling Department to contact career education students and help them develop pathways toward their career. This outreach, characteristic of the new student services model, also provides information and encouragement to succeed for career education students.
In response to the Vision for Success, Objective 2.14 was added in 2018. This objective is aligned with the College’s move to institute a noncredit program, one with particular focus on skills supporting short-term vocational or workforce training goals. While it takes a while to create courses and programs, teach them, and then assess student gains to determine if the objective is meeting its measurable outcomes, some preliminary markers of success can be noted. The noncredit program has already developed 35 career education courses in seven departments: business administration; business supervision management; computer applications and occupational technology; computers, networks, and emerging technology; engineering; graphic arts; and multimedia. Additionally, 12 noncredit certificates in these departments have been created and approved by the Chancellor’s Office, all of which will help students acquire specific skill sets that prepare them for an in-demand job. As the noncredit program grows and this objective carries over to the next strategic plan, the College will be able to meet the Vision for Success goals projected for 2022.
GOAL 3: Increase college and community understanding and awareness of, and sensitivity to, diverse cultures and perspectives.

OBJECTIVE 3.14. | By 2017, implement two campus-wide activities and strategies to promote cultural awareness per semester.

Objective 3.14 was initially met by the 2017 timeline, but the intent of the objective was to make the promotion of cultural awareness an ongoing implementation. Since 2017, the College has continued to meet the measurable outcomes annually. Under the leadership of ODIAIC the College presents multiple speaker series and discussions on diversity and inclusion each semester. The initially-conceived topic of cultural awareness focused primarily on national and ethnic cultural groups, but over time “cultural awareness” has grown to include all manner of subcultures, including topics such as LGBTQ+, political cultures, and Deaf awareness.

As awareness and sensitivity to different cultures and perspectives have grown and become more open, the awareness the presence of these various individuals and groups on campus has grown, as well. The understanding that comes with learning provides a more accepting and engaging college environment, where all—students and employees alike—can be made to feel a welcome part of Ohlone College. This objective has certainly been met and is continuously being met.

OBJECTIVE 3.15. | By 2019, identify opportunities, develop materials, and communicate how to incorporate diverse perspectives, curriculum, and instruction to increase sensitivity in the classroom.

As composed in the 2015 writing of the strategic plan, this objective was aimed at revising the curriculum so more courses satisfied the diversity requirement in the local general education pattern. At the time there were 41 approved courses meeting that graduation requirement, and the measurable outcome in 2015 was to increase to 45 the numbers of diversity-approved courses. Over time, that outcome was shown to be irrelevant for multiple reasons, but primarily because the general education committee was revising the understanding of what was meant by “diversity” in the curriculum. Ultimately the original objective language was replaced with the current plan to increase sensitivity in the classroom to various diverse perspectives.
The operative action plans created with the revision in 2018 focused on training for LGBTQ+ sensitivity and an extensive faculty certificate training on global literacy. Both action plans were completed. The College hosted LGBTQ + Safe Zone training in August 2018 with 14 people trained to then lead training for others. Additionally the managers’ group, DDAS, went through the Safe Zone training. Subsequent workshops have continued in the effort to raise College awareness and sensitivity to LGBTQ+ students and employees. The Global Literacy Certificate Training was launched in fall 2017 and, in keeping with this objective, was expanded to include more modules and more faculty. Given recent competing priorities for faculty—notably the work involved in the ACCJC site visit—this training with set aside for a while. However, as originally planned, it was a well-envisioned training in understanding diverse cultures, and it was successfully implemented.

Although not listed as an action plan but reflecting the College’s focus on diversity and inclusion, the Career Center also took action. In spring 2019, the center posted a diversity and inclusion employee panel to showcase how employers diversify their talent pipelines and ensure they have inclusive work environments and workforces. Given these three examples, it is clear how the College is finding opportunities to incorporate diverse perspectives and increase sensitivity, not only in the classroom, but collegewide.
GOAL 4: Create an understanding of, and commitment to, equity across the college that ensures access and success for underrepresented and disproportionately impacted students, consistent with the goals of Vision for Success.

OBJECTIVE 4.17. By 2019, increase retention and persistence rates of historically underrepresented and disproportionately impacted student groups to the college average.

The three objectives in Goal #4 align with the Vision for Success goals to ensure equity for underrepresented students and to remove disproportionate impact. Objective 4.17 focuses on increasing retention and persistence rates for these groups. By way of definition, historically underrepresented groups refer to African Americans, Latinx, and Native Americans. Because the Native American population of students is so small, targeted interventions are not feasible, so the focus of this objective is to raise the rate at which African American and Latinx students remain in classes without withdrawing (retention) and re-enroll in subsequent semesters (persistence).

Successfully implemented action plans include the establishment of the Umoja learning community for African Americans and the expansion of the Puente learning community for Latinx students. As a component of program review, departmental data was disaggregated so faculty could know if there was disproportionate impact on either of these two groups—or even for other groups, who then would become a focus of this objective, too. This particular action plan also called for training for faculty and staff in understanding and addressing the data. The initiation of data coaches through Guided Pathways is an ongoing effort to complete this action plan.

When first conceived and captured in the College’s institution-set standards, there was an awareness that, in 2015, African American and Latinx student groups overall lagged behind the rest of the College population in retention and persistence. The setting of what seemed like a realistic and attainable intermediate standard was approved by Faculty Senate. The College acknowledged that both groups could be brought up to the collegewide average, but Faculty Senate was aware that retention and persistence rates are slow to change and progress would have to come incrementally.

Therefore, the institutional standard for retention rates for the African American and Latinx students was purposely set low at 80.2%, although the collegewide standard was 82.9%. Actual retention rates from 2015 were 82.7% for African American students, 84.6% for Latinx students, and 86.2% for all students. The gap was apparent for underrepresented groups, but not insurmountable. With the guidance of the Vision for Success, the College was expected to set a goal for 2022 that all achievement gaps for underrepresented students be erased. This led to a revised objective that would strive to have African American and Latinx students at the collegewide average. For the retention metric, there was some success. African American students maintained an 86.3% retention rate, approximating the college rate of 86.5%; the African American rate was up 3.6% over the 2015 rate of 82.7%, whereas the collegewide rates only went up 0.3% over the same period. Latinx, however, had an 84.6% retention rate, exactly what had been in 2015.
Persistence rates are another story. This rate tracks continuing enrollment, both fall-to-spring and fall-to-fall, of students who return the next semester and the next year. The news about persistence rates for underrepresented represent is mixed.

The good news is that Latinx students persist at rates at or above the all-college rate. The most recent (fall 2018) rates show both Latinx students and all students with a fall 2018 to spring 2019 persistence of 73.0%. For the three prior years, Latinx students had fall-to-spring rates higher than the all college average. More impressive is the fall-to-fall Latinx persistence. Their fall 2018 to fall 2019 persistence was 53.8%, significantly above the college rate of 51.0%; and for the three prior years, Latinx persistence was 1.6%–4.1% higher than average.

On the other hand, African American students were well below the College persistence rates, over 7% lower than both the fall-to-spring and the fall-to-fall rates. (Figures 16 & 17)

**Figure 16: Fall-to-Spring Persistence Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2015 to Spring 2016</th>
<th>Fall 2016 to Spring 2017</th>
<th>Fall 2017 to Spring 2018</th>
<th>Fall 2018 to Spring 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All College Rate</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
<td>72.2%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinx</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
<td>72.6%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 17: Fall-to-Fall Persistence Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2015 to Fall 2016</th>
<th>Fall 2016 to Fall 2017</th>
<th>Fall 2017 to Fall 2018</th>
<th>Fall 2018 to Fall 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All College Rate</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinx</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Also noteworthy, and perhaps reflecting the persistence or lack of persistence of the above groups, is the relative declines in enrollment. Excluding dual enrollment and consortium*, all college enrollment declined by 7.8% from fall 2015 to fall 2018. However, African American students, who had the lowest persistence rates, declined 29.6% over those four years. Conversely, Latino students, who had higher than average persistence, only declined by 1.8% in enrollment numbers.

OBJECTIVE 4.18. | By 2019 increase success rates of historically underrepresented and disproportionately impacted student groups to the college average.

Similar to the previous objective, 4.18 sought to increase success rates among underrepresented students—again, African American and Latinx students. As before, the initial target rate was increased to align with the all-college average in response to the Vision for Success mandates.

Over a five-year period beginning fall 2015, some small gains were made by both African American and Latinx students in the performance of passing courses with a grade of C or better. However, larger gains—though still small—were made to the all college average, resulting in both underrepresented groups falling further below the average. (Figure 18)

Figure 18: Success Rates

![Success Rates Chart]

*Dual enrollment and consortium students are excluded because their specific enrollment trends would skew the data. Dual enrollment students, for instance, generally enroll in year-long fall semester classes. They remain enrolled throughout the subsequent spring, but that spring enrollment is not captured in the data. Consortium students are generally full-time employed public safety officers whose intent is to take a single course for professional development, but not to be continuously enrolled. Retention rates are also skewed as neither group generally withdraws, so retention rates are regularly abnormally high, often above 95% retention rates. Similarly, substandard grades are very rare in consortium courses and only occasional in dual enrollment, so success rate for both groups are also extremely high. Including these two groups would lower all-college persistence rates but raise both retention and success rates. However, any interventions the College initiated to support such rates would not affect either of these groups, precluding an accurate appraisal of the effectiveness of the intervention.
The action plans for Objective 4.18 were essentially the same as those for 4.17, focusing on the Umoja and Puente learning communities and an increased utilization of tutors. The Umoja community touched less than 10% of enrolled African American students, while Puente enrolled twice as many Latinx students as the Umoja enrollment—but that number still represented only 3% of the total Latinx enrollment. Puente success rates were remarkably high (91.4% in the fall 2019 English learning community and 88.1% for the semester), but the opposite was true for the Umoja students in their initial pilot during fall 2019 (32.1% in the English learning community and 48.0% for the semester).


Another focus of Goal #4 is access for underrepresented students—that is, the rate at which they are enrolling. Access looks at both the number and percentage of student groups enrolled, but also at the rate of students who completed applications and subsequently enrolled.

When looking at numbers, the rate of increase or decrease should be compared to the overall College rise or fall in enrollment. For instance, at the start of the strategic plan, the College enrolled 9,937 students in fall of 2015; in fall 2019, that number was 8,670 students—a 12.8% decline. In fall 2015 there were 429 African American students enrolled and 2,379 Latinx students. By fall 2019, African American enrollment had fallen to 237, a 44.8% decline. Latinx students in fall 2019 numbered 2,144, a 9.9% drop, less than the overall enrollment drop and, therefore a relative gain in Latinx enrollment. Similarly, African American enrollment as a percentage of all college enrollment went from 4.3% in fall 2015 to 2.7% in fall 2019; over the same period, Latinx enrollment rose from 23.9% to 24.7%.
Access is also about deciding to enroll. The overall rate of students who enroll compared to the number of who apply was 37.5% for fall 2019 applicants. That rate is significantly down from the fall 2015 rate of 64.4%. Underrepresented applicants saw a similar decline in enrolling between fall 2015 and fall 2019. Latinx entry rates after applying fell from 60.9% to 40.0%; for African American applicants the decline was from 49.7% to 27.7%.

Apart from the Umoja and Puente action plans that also support Objective 4.19, an additional action plan was added to increase the number of students receiving Pell and Promise grants. While this is a good plan to support not only the recruitment and persistence of underrepresented students, it also is an important task to bolster the Student Centered Funding Formula. The unfortunate demographic fact of the District is that the cost of living is so high that relatively few residents can qualify for financial aid, and the number of potentially qualifying residents is in decline. Given the cost of living and the absence of financial aid, it may not be surprising that the underrepresented access is diminishing.
GOAL 5: Ensure the college provides access to high quality courses and programs that meet the diverse educational needs of the community.

OBJECTIVE 5.19. Increase college knowledge of and response to the educational needs of the community and assess through continual community engagement.

This objective had two very successful action plans that both raised the level of community awareness of the College and met the educational needs of the community. The first response was to address the gaps in knowledge of educational needs of the community and the community awareness of educational programs offered by the College. To address those gaps, the President’s Advisory Committee (PAC) was created, a regular meeting between college leaders, staff, and faculty with community members such as educators, elected officials, business leaders, and others.

This gathering, once every three months for breakfast and discussion, has been eminently successful, building awareness, collaboration, and mutual support among the College and 50-80 interested and connected district leaders. A typical meeting would include an update on what the College is doing; discussions around the tables to hear insights and feedback on a specific topic; and a report back to the community members about what the College has been able to do with suggestions put forth in the prior PAC meeting. In this way, the community members feel heard and valued—which, of course, they are. But the discussions always yield insights about what the College could do better or do for the first time. These discussions also revealed the gaps in knowledge between the community and the College.

A second successful action plan was the creation of a noncredit program, an action plan added in response to Strong Workforce goals. Of particular note was the noncredit offerings to help students be more work-ready, possessing the soft skills necessary for success in the workplace—customer service skills, for example. Within this noncredit program are multiple courses dealing with customer service and soft skills, the most requested addition to the curriculum from business community members of PAC.

OBJECTIVE 5.20. Ensure programs and services respond to identified student and community needs as evidenced by results on biennial student and community surveys and Program and Services Reviews.

This objective goes hand-in-hand with Objective 5.19, although it focuses more on an internal awareness of gaps, particularly as revealed in program review and surveys. The initial gap analysis was conducted in 2017 with a discussion among academic deans and the biennial student survey. What emerged was a practice of having the research office pose pointed questions within the program review process that heighten the awareness of gaps that faculty can then address in their program reviews. There is also a regular report to college groups on survey results from the students, staff, and faculty satisfaction surveys. The surveys are one tool that can be used to determine the effectiveness of ways gaps have been addressed. Ongoing data updates for program review also provide indication of gaps being closed, or not. Many of the gains in the strategic plan can be linked to the practice of identifying gaps and providing responses as suggested by Objective 5.20.
OBJECTIVE 5.21. | By fall 2020, increase awareness and usage among current and potential students of educational programs and student services available to help them succeed at the college level.

Many of the issues arising in this objective were similarly addressed in Goal #1. The College’s good educational programs and student support services were not known to all, nor were some easily accessible by all. To address this issue, ten different action plans were identified, including projects such as implementing the Student Planning electronic educational plan software; incorporating the creation of educational plans into the orientation and freshman day activities; increasing counselor contact with students apart from their main counseling center; and offering last minute orientation for late-enrolling students. All of these action plans were initiated and are ongoing, and they provide access to services in a broader scale and to underserved student groups that may have been missed previously.

Additionally, counselors began to increase their contact with their high school counterparts, both increasing presence at high school counselor conferences and hosting meetings with high school counselors at the College. Several services were added or expanded as an online format, specifically intended to increase awareness and access, and particularly for those evening-, weekend-, and online-only students who could not readily access on-campus services.

New online services included Student Lingo (a series of instructional modules to promote student services), Starfish (the early alert system for at-risk students), Cranium café (live student to counselor interaction), and multiple online options through the Career Center supporting career exploration and placement. Midway through the strategic plan, another action plan was added to create a student services help desk to increase face-to-face interaction between students and student services staff, as well as providing greater responsiveness to phone contacts (which, as yet, has not been achieved).

Through the work of the SSSP, major strides have been made toward making all student services more accessible and making students more aware of the available services. There is always more that can be done, and needs to be done. This is why this objective will carry over to the 2020-2025 strategic plan, but the intent of Objective 5.21 was clearly met for the current plan.
GOAL 6: Use human, fiscal, technological, and physical resources responsibly, effectively, efficiently, and sustainably to maximize student learning and achievement, using established planning processes.

OBJECTIVE 6.22. Work to implement a staffing plan in order to ensure a sufficient number of full-time faculty to support all of the college’s education programs and services.

In response to an accreditation recommendation, Objective 6.22 was intended to increase the number of full-time faculty, that number having been significantly depleted after the 2010 recession. At the height of the College’s growth, full-time faculty had numbered 151, but by 2014–2015 the full-time faculty numbers had dropped almost 30% to 108. Over the same period, full-time equivalent students (FTES) had also declined, but only by about 10%. A plan was therefore needed to increase full-time faculty to adequately serve the student population.

That plan was first implemented in 2015-2016 with the successful hiring of 14 new full-time faculty. Subsequent hiring plans called for adding two new faculty each year until the College reached 136 full-time faculty—a number deemed appropriate in light of declining enrollment.

By 2018, the full-time faculty contingent was 129, but no new faculty were slated to be hired in 2018–2019 because of a SCFF-provoked hiring pause. Although SCFF constraints have slowed the process, the College now continues to hire additional faculty, maintaining an appropriate number of full-time faculty to adequately support the educational programs and services and to ensure compliance with the accreditation and state mandated guidelines and standards.

An action plan was added in 2018 to also increase full-time equivalent faculty (FTEF) in counseling. With added workloads produced by SSSP, more counseling resources were necessary to meet the planned activities. Because there were so many instructional faculty needs to be met, the prospect of increasing FTEF in counseling by making full-time hires was doubtful. But with the employment of multiple adjunct counselors, the department was able to increase FTEF and begin to meet the needs of a much more vigorous and engaged student services division.
OBJECTIVE 6.23. | Annually identify needs and increase opportunities for professional development and advancement among faculty and staff, as assessed through PIOs, Program and Services Reviews, and surveys.

This objective sought to identify additional opportunities for professional development and advancement for faculty and staff, initially focusing on what faculty and staff thought to be lacking in professional development opportunities. The original objective had just one action plan: conducting surveys to determine professional development needs. One of the early responses indicated the absence of a formal professional development structure for managers. Both faculty and classified staff had professional development committees, but managers did not. So, early on, this objective was used to address the needs of managers. At the same time, annual surveys began to be conducted for each of the three groups—faculty, classified staff, and management—to identify their specific growth and advancement needs.

What emerged from these surveys was a perceived duplication of efforts among the professional development committees. To respond to this inefficiency, an additional action plan was added to create a formal Professional Development Plan. This action plan has now become one of the College’s institutional improvement objectives (IIO). An initial committee was formed in fall 2019, with the expectation of completing an Integrated Professional Development Plan in spring 2020. Given the COVID-19-related disruptions to the spring semester, completion of the plan has been postponed until fall 2020.


Given the cyclical downturns in the economy and, now, the advent of the Student Centered Funding Formula, it is even more imperative that plans are made and implemented to produce additional non-apportionment revenue. It should not be surprising that this objective will be continued in the 2022-2025 strategic plan.

The 2015-2020 strategic plan included nine different action plans aimed at increasing non-apportionment revenue, each of which were seeking relatively modest revenue increases. Some of the modest goals were thwarted by the ongoing construction, some by the lack of community support, and some by the loss of key personnel. On the other hand, one completely unexpected gift covered all the shortfalls in this five-year plan.

Due to the construction and lack of attractive and accessible facilities, the planned increase to Civic Center Rentals income actually declined about 30% from the 2015 baseline. However, with the move to the Academic Core and the decision to maintain portables at Newark, it is anticipated the rental income may be able to increase, given more available and attractive spaces for rent.

The bookstore, a third-party venture, was contracted to share a portion of the profits with the College. But with the declining enrollments and, perhaps, a move to free online resources by some faculty, bookstore profits have declined significantly. As a result, non-apportionment revenue from this source has been reduced by almost 70% since 2015. Given the bulk of students now returning to the Fremont campus with the completion of construction, bookstore revenues should see an increase, but it is still doubtful they will approach the 2015 levels anytime soon.

Like the action plans cited above, revenue from the food service contract declined as well, particularly when the cafeteria was closed completely for remodeling. Although this source of non-apportionment income decreased dramatically in 2019, once
the renovated cafeteria is back online revenue should return to at least 2015 levels and, hopefully, beyond. Prior to its closing, the cafeteria saw a 12% decline in revenue, and considering a similar decline in enrollment coupled with the disruption caused by construction, it is anticipated that new facilities and proximity to the Academic Core Complex will generate an increase in this area.

The past five years witnessed both the highs and the lows of the ongoing desire of the College to provide additional non-apportionment income by developing the frontage property at the Fremont campus. The highs were the proposal by SteelWave to build housing and retail on the property. Beautifully rendered drawings and plans melded with the ambience of Mission San Jose, maintained the integrity of Fremont campus landmarks, and met College expectations. The proposed development produced an acceptable amount of annual income to the College and met with Board approval. The College was finally on its way to developing the frontage property after years of trying.

However, this development also produced the lows of the frontage property dream. Expressing concern about traffic impact and other aesthetic issues, community members successfully launched an anti-development protest and, capturing the minds of similarly-oriented government officials, eventually succeeded in getting the College to abandon plans to develop the frontage property. That is not to say the property will never be developed, but it is a recognition that as long as community resistance is piqued, certain approaches to development are not going to be accepted by the residents in the area.

A fifth action plan for Objective 6.24 was to increase international student enrollment. These are students who do not generate apportionment but pay-out-of-state tuition, which remains with the College. After some years of dramatic increase in international student numbers, a projection of increased revenue in 2015 seemed like a sure way of bolstering
non-apportionment income. But with the new federal administration taking office in 2017, the nation became much less friendly to students recruited from abroad, and enrollments of international students fell nationwide. Those numbers continue to decline at the College.

Declining numbers of international students also affects a major source of community education revenue. The largest of the four community education income streams is from the English Language Institute (ELI), a venue for international students to improve their English reading and speaking skills. By 2019, ELI income had fallen 60%. Another major community education endeavor is Ohlone for Kids (OFK), the summer program the College hosts for elementary and teenage children in the community. Construction severely limited usable space on either campus, and OFK had to be conducted at rented facilities for the past few years, distancing participants from the College, imposing logistic challenges, and adding substantial additional cost to hosting the program. This led to a consistent downturn in OFK revenue for the three years after the 2015 baseline. However, in 2019 there was a 14% surge in revenue, almost returning to 2015 levels. With the available facilities in the Academic Core Complex and the Newark portables, and a proposed expansion of sessions and class offerings, OFK was poised for major revenue gains in this, the last year of the 2015-2020 strategic plan. Unfortunately, that hope will not be realized until future years as the COVID-19 crisis has curtailed most of the OFK plans for the summer 2020.

Apart from ELI and OFK, community education has consistently offered fee-based classes to the community, including sports camps, adult education, and workforce development. The decline in these areas are noteworthy—in excess of $350,000—but attributable to the hindrances of construction, loss of key personnel, and an improving economy that then reduces the demand for workforce development programs. The bottom line is that since 2015, all community education programs together have contributed 40% less revenue than the planned 5% annual increase.

Contract education is another source of non-apportionment revenue, and in this area the College has seen some gains, although total income is relatively small. From generating $60,000 in 2015, the current contract education programs now generate a little over $100,000. A 67% increase certainly exceeds the projected 2% gain, but again, in terms of actual dollars, a 67% increase is very small—but positive.

The action plan to complete the solar energy array was met with solar fields installed on both the Fremont and Newark campuses. The total cost of the systems was $24.5 million, with an estimated payback to be $30 million at the end of 25 years, a $5.5 million savings to the College. Currently the solar arrays produce about 41% of the total energy used by the College and offset about 53% of the total energy bills.

The high water mark in the non-apportionment revenue comes from the Foundation, which has consistently increased its contribution to the College over the past four years. Noteworthy, even on a statewide level, was a $9.8 million gift from Mr. Frank DiMino. This was the largest gift ever received by the college, and the fifth largest gift received by any California community college...ever! The majority of the gift was designated to provide furniture and equipment for the Academic Core Complex, but the gift also provided for the establishment of the Lytton Center for History and the Public Good and for a significant contribution to scholarships. In appreciation, the Academic Core Complex was named in honor of Mr. Frank DiMino.
Objective 6.25. | Develop and maintain technological systems that support college effectiveness and efficiency.

For a college within the bounds of Silicon Valley, one would expect robust, user-friendly, state of the art technology; this is the aspiration of Objective 6.25. But what is also known is that state of the art in 2015 may well be obsolete by 2020. To meet the objective, then, the College must be nimble and forward thinking, ever ready to change and improve its technological systems.

Over the course of the 2015-2020 strategic plan, there have been multiple upgrades, introductions, and revisions to the action plans in this objective. As those action plans are met, the College moves forward in its effectiveness and efficiency.

As mentioned earlier in the report, the College has implemented Starfish, an early alert system for at-risk students. Student Lingo, a series of on-demand student success workshops, was put into service. The College website was completely redesigned to be more intuitive and student-focused. Upgrades to the delivery of several vital student services occurred with the implementation of Financial Aid Self-Service, Student Accounts Self-Service, and the anticipated Student Self-Service, which will become the registration portal, replacing WebAdvisor. Also in progress is Student Planning, the electronic educational planning tool.

In addition to major software installments, the College has provided training opportunities to students and employees alike. Of note have been the regular accessibility seminars so employees can post documents to the web that are accessible by all. In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the College has been particularly responsive to the technology needs of both students and employees to incorporate remote and online teaching and learning.

Apart from the action plans enumerated for the objective, the College continues to upgrade technology. A newer version of Colleague was implemented; CCCApply was upgraded; new program review software, Nuventive, was adopted; Precision Campus, a data access tool, was created; Ohlone email accounts were provided for all students; cloud-based assessment of student learning outcomes was installed; and numerous behind-the-scenes services—upgrades to wireless access, creation of electronic forms, or document imaging, for example—were implemented. Clearly this objective is being continuously met.

OBJECTIVE 6.26. | Continuously maintain and improve a technology infrastructure to support students and staff effectively as assessed through biennial surveys.

This objective ties closely to, and sometimes overlaps, the previous objective. But the main thrust of Objective 6.26 is to continuously upgrade the hardware that supports all the technology mentioned above. The primary action plan was to create and fund a computer replacement plan in 2015 and then to annually upgrade hardware in accord with the plan and the funding. The plan was created, funded, and annually implemented throughout the life of the 2015-2020 strategic plan. Using an initial endowment from the Measure G bond, funds allow for regular periodic replacement of faculty, staff, and classroom computers—four-year replacement cycle for laptops and five-year for desktops. As this process continues year-to-year, the technology infrastructure of the College is maintained and the objective continues to be met.
OBJECTIVE 6.27. | Employ a process of continuous improvement in order to maintain quality facilities to established standards.

Maintaining facilities is a never-ending task, but planning for efficiency and improvement give timely, attainable outcomes. Objective 6.27 has six action plans—all of which were completed—aimed at maintenance program improvements and efficiencies. The improvements began with the implementation in early 2017 of a facilities ticketing system, whereby work requests could be submitted and tracked electronically. This then naturally led to the plan to refine the workflow process, a task begun in 2017 but still ongoing as part of continuous improvement. An evaluation of all equipment was completed in 2017 also, as well as an assessment of all facilities needs. This then led to a scheduled maintenance plan, completed at the end of 2017.

OBJECTIVE 6.28. | Continuously maintain and improve sustainable practices for resource usage as assessed annually through established metrics.

This objective, also focused on the use of facilities and physical resources, addresses the value the College places on sustainable practices. There are certain minimal levels of sustainability the College must meet to maintain permits and certifications, and to meet annual reporting requirements. All six of the action plans ensuring sustainable practices have been met. Included in the completed action plans are waste management and recycling metrics; water use plans and drought restrictions; emission reports; plans for commercial organic recycling; storm water preservation; and construction waste management. The last of these sustainable practices specifically applies to new construction and requires 75% of construction waste to be recycled rather than being sent to landfill. The College values sustainability and will continue to maintain practices supporting recycling.
GOAL 7: Strengthen institutional effectiveness through the engagement of all members of the college community in innovation, participation, communication, improvement, and continual assessment.

OBJECTIVE 7.32. Continuously promote communication and collaboration across the College, as assessed through surveys.

An ongoing concern of the College—thereby lending to its additional inclusion in the 2020-2025 strategic plan—is transparent communication and collaboration. In a system that takes pride in its participatory governance model, there still seems to be too many constituents who have not heard, do not understand, or feel excluded. To mitigate those realities or feelings, Objective 7.32 provoked various responses intended to promote communication and collaboration across the College.

One of the most effective interventions was the creation of the President’s Advisory Committee (PAC), a venue to regularly engage community leaders and residents in the life and work of the college. PAC meetings are held every three months, bringing together elected officials, educators, business people, and any others interested in the College. The meetings provide opportunity both for College leaders to communicate to the community what the College is doing, and for the College to hear the concerns, questions, and ideas the community may have about the College. With the implementation of the PAC, there has been much greater exchange of information and an increase in responsiveness to community observations and suggestions.

On an internal level, a hallmark of improved communication and collaboration was the successful work of Task Force A. Focused on the arming of campus police officers, it became immediately apparent that such a discussion could be divisive, breaking down collaboration rather than building it up. But given the work of the task force—openly listening, researching, and discussing—a prospectively volatile decision was mutually and amicably reached.

Of late, there have been numerous open forums aimed at increasing information sharing and transparency. To name a few, the past academic year alone has seen two collegewide forums on the Student Centered Funding Formula; two budget forums; an all-college gathering to assess college strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; a similar all-college summit to craft objectives for the 2020-2025 strategic plan; and even the inauguration of Pastries with the President, an opportunity for casual and open communication with the President.

Certainly the case can be made that the College fosters transparent communication and collaboration; but like objectives in Goal #1 that relate to student learning and achievement, some objectives must be continuously met. Open communication is always a challenge in any organization, and to remain transparent, or even to improve transparency, an objective like 7.32 must be continuously carried forward and consistently addressed.
OBJECTIVE 7.33. | By 2020, create specific structures that encourage innovation and entrepreneurship.

Some objectives sound better in theory than they turn out to be in practice. Objective 7.33 may be one of those, given the noble aspirations to be innovative and entrepreneurial. It was a realistic objective to create a structure, but once created, there was not an ongoing action plan that would promote the desired outcome. Overall, this objective may have either been unrealistic from the start, or it was unsupported after its start.

The initial action plan was to restructure and give new leadership to the Foundation, with the hope that this could somehow leverage or provoke entrepreneurship and fundraising. The Foundation was revamped and now benefits from better leadership. The Foundation has been innovative and entrepreneurial in its works, and, as reported above, did its part in generating non-apportionment revenue.

But the original intent of the objective went beyond the Foundation being innovative and entrepreneurial. As conceived, the objective was to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship across the College, among the faculty, staff, and students alike—not just within one department. Somewhere along the line, the intent was lost, and the momentum for the objective was lost, or maybe displaced. Midway through the plan, the focus changed from innovative and entrepreneurial to inclusive and diverse. The work of ODIAC was added as an action plan and regarded as a success measure; but eventually it was felt that the ODAC’s efforts were more appropriate to Objective 3.14, and the action plan moved there. The result was a lapse of energy to promote Objective 7.33, and the objective was overlooked.

To be fair, the restructured Foundation was particularly successful, and innovation and entrepreneurship characterize the work of the Foundation. Given that as the only action plan in the original strategic plan, the objective was met. However, the vision of the objective was not well articulated and, therefore, unrealized.

OBJECTIVE 7.34. | Increase opportunities to strengthen relationships within the Ohlone College community annually.

Objective 7.34 serves as the impetus to keep the College as a family, focusing on relationships beyond the day-to-day routine. Sometimes this is interpreted as doing engaging and fun things together; other times it is centered around doing non-routine projects. But the emphasis is always on interacting in such a way as to build relationships among the College community that exceed job descriptions or position.

Over the years of the plan, the College has had several exceptional opportunities to have fun together. The collegewide activities accompanying the 50th anniversary stand out, as do the classified employees’ appreciation breakfast, Welcome Back luncheons, celebrations of retirees and newer faculty gaining tenure, and all-College ice cream socials. Family projects include shared efforts to complete the Institutional Self Evaluation Report, to launch Guided Pathways, and to celebrate and tour the opening of the Academic Core buildings. A highlight of the year was the college and community-wide reception following the grand opening celebration of the ACB. Realizing that hard work needs to be co-mingled with regular respites, the College has even created a committee to ensure that work does not become drudgery—the FUN committee. Its task is to regularly promote informal events designed specifically to fulfill the intent of objective 7.34.
To illustrate that relationships can become stronger in times of adversity, witness the coming together of the college community during the COVID-19 crisis. Although faculty and staff have been sheltering in place, community-building opportunities have increased with weekly Family Meetings via Zoom—open forums for everyone at the College to share stories, issues, concerns, and foibles about working remotely and apart from one another. The faculty also added their own venue for discussion with their creation of Metaphysical Musings, a chance for professionals to grapple with the pedagogical challenges of remote instruction.
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